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ABSTRACT

Life trajectories and education in a welfare state were examined from two points of departure. The ways in which education as a system is related to social origin, gender, and career were analyzed in a longitudinal study following a cohort of 671 students (329 males and 342 females) in a Swedish community through the educational system and into the labor market from age 7 to age 23 years. A total of 352 of these students had working class careers, and 319 of these students had middle class careers. Data for 655 of the students underwent more detailed statistical analyses. Secondly, students' concepts of education were examined through criticisms and visions of a better school life as found in the life stories of 26 26-year-old participants in the longitudinal study. The functioning of the system of education in the society is described and contrasted with the lived experiences of persons in different careers and positions in society. The impact of education on the lives of citizens of the welfare state and the meaning of school experiences in the reproduction of education and educational change are reviewed. Three tables and three graphs illustrate the study. An appendix contains results of covariance analyses of performance dependent on social background, career, gender, and school and earlier performance; and subjects' criticisms and visions of education. (SLD)

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EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOLING IN THE WELFARE STATE
A Longitudinal Study of Life Trajectories and Legitimation of Education in Sweden

A contribution to the symposium
LIFE COURSE AND CULTURAL/SOCIAL CHANGE
THE 22:ND CONGRESS OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY
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INTRODUCTION:

In this study we will deal with life trajectories and education from two points of departure. We will analyse how education as a system is related to social origin, gender, and career in a longitudinal study, where we have followed a cohort in a Swedish community through the educational system and into the labour market - from the age of seven to twenty-three. And we will describe how education is conceived of in retrospect in terms of criticisms and visions of a better school based on life stories told to us by former students, participating in the longitudinal study and who have pursued different careers so far in their lives.*

Thus, we will be able to describe and contrast the functioning of the system of education in society with the lived experiences and meaning of education from persons in different careers and positions in society. Based on this we will discuss the impact of education in the lives of citizens in the welfare state and the meaning of experiences of schooling in the reproduction and change of education.

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THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Education is an old institution with different functions in modern societies related to culture and socialization as well as to qualification and selection of individuals for different positions in society. Educational systems are results of social and political struggles formed by cultural and economic contradictions and developments. As an "improductive" institution education is dependent on how successful it is in appearing to be legitimate (c f Meyer & Rowan, 1977). As Boli and Ramirez (1986) point out in their analysis of mass education and world culture:

> In short, education derives its legitimacy from its purported importance for reaching virtually all the goals of modern society. (p 68)

Here, legitimation is linked to the historical development and functioning of education linked to such social constructions as individuality, childhood, and state and to the organization of education in school systems populated by teachers and pupils.

Such a macro perspective focussing on the rhetoric and functioning of education in a historical and transnational context can be contrasted with one dealing with the personal experiences of the participants in this system. Education is an institution where citizens spend a long time. They will not only be educated in terms of receiving knowledge and acquiring skills and attitudes -

they will experience schooling, presumably in different ways. Such lived experiences will be of interest, we think, for the discussion of trust and legitimation in education - and perhaps also a challenge for changes of schools in a democratic society.

Thus, in order to understand the reproduction and change of education, where issues of legitimation are of vital interest, it seems to be of importance to study the experienced meanings of education and schooling. What are the criticisms and visions of education based on such experiences - and who are the critics and visionaries in relation to their routes through the educational system and their positions in the social structure?

The tasks and functions of education have changed over the years and so have theories of education. Thus, during the twentieth century education has been linked with concepts of social progress and the transition from a traditional to a modern society in different theories of educational reforms (c f Paulston, 1977). Such theories have been criticised in different ways, mostly by "reproduction theories" of different kinds. An assumption in such theories is that education is a means for reproduction of culture (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), or economic relations (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). It is basic to reproduction theories that they stress other and darker sides of education linked with such concepts as control and oppression. Educational is not only about socialization and cultural transmission. It is rather about dominance and hegemonic interests as a means for the ruling classes to

maintain their position.

Though reproduction theories have a substantial empirical basis (e g in terms of lack of social mobility, Halsey, Heath & Ridge, 1980) they were put into theoretical problematic positions, referring to sociological reductionism (diTomaso, 1982) or to the neglect of actors and strategies of resistance among subcultures (Willis, 1977, Giroux, 1983). Given such an interest in actors, strategies and cultures it is of importance to focus on the experiences and meanings of schooling among those being educated. However, such studies have often had an impressionistic character, where descriptions of utterances and episodes are legio, but less is done concerning school careers and life trajectories in relation to different (sub)cultures and to changing features in the social structure, as pointed out by Lindblad & Pérez (1990). Education is conceived of as a field formed by social forces and constraints and where different social classes and cultures create their responses and strategies. Education has different meaning for different careers in society. But it also has an impact on these careers, the formation of life trajectories, and on the structuring of society.

Based on considerations such as those presented above Lindblad and Pérez (a a) regarded it to be of value to study a whole cohort of young people over a longer time-span in order to describe their careers in terms of selection to different educational programmes and kinds of work. Their study focussed on such concepts as social

class, gender, and career in relation to the relative impact of education and the differentiating and selecting functions of education. We will here use results from their study about the working of the educational system. However, we will complement these results with the experiences of schooling derived from an ongoing qualitative study.

The concept of career is of vital concern. It is treated as a sequence of positions in the social class structure. The concept of class has different meanings in the social sciences linked to social stratification, status, or class structure in terms of consumption or production. In the present study we use a class concept derived from Therborn (1971) based on conceptions of economic exploitation and based on types of occupation and the organizational history of unions. Since we are dealing with combinations of positions over time we would get too complex an outcome if we used more elaborated class distinctions. Thus, at present we have to use very simple categories. We assume that the distinction between working-class positions (production and service workers and students in programmes for such positions) and middle-class positions (middle strata, petty bourgeoisie and students to such positions) is of vital interest when dealing with education and careers in society. In relation to this assumption two comments must be made. First, the working- and the middle-class and the relations between them are just a part of the structure of social classes, but a part where education could be regarded as important when refilling the positions in this struc-

ture. And second, we are here focussing on the 'vertical' dimension of social classes, related to the structure of occupations. However, a 'horizontal' dimension - where we find relations between different segments in society - is of vital importance as well. However, in this paper only the vertical dimension is in focus. A career - educational and vocational - is consequently regarded as achieved vertical positions in the class structure over time.[2]

Other important concepts are those of "meaning" and "experience". First, following Asplund (1966) it is of importance to distinguish between the way a social phenomenon works and the meaning it has. In studies of education we ask who will get what education with what kind of consequences. Answers to such questions might be trivial, but they might also be fascinating, depending on the meaning it has for us - what do we see when we know ... and what do we want to know in order to understand education?

Second, the meaning of education is not only something exclusively for researchers. The meaning of education is something that is part and parcel of everyday participation in education and the experiences of such participation.

Experience and meaning are concepts with connections to such traditions as phenomenology or hermeneutics. In this study we will

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[2]. Later analyses will use other classifications as SEI (Socio-Economic Indexation) and Classifications of Occupations (NYK) to deal with the horizontal dimensions.

take a specific point of departure. We will use the concept of "life story" (c f Bertaux, 1981) in order to find relations between social structure, culture, and individual biography. We do this with a phenomenographic bent. Phenomenography, according to Marton (1981) is based on the distinction between the world around us "as such" and "as it is conceived to be". It is focussing on the latter - to describe conceptions of the world around us. And within phenomenography you are not interested in frequencies but in qualitatively different categories. In sum phenomenography is intended to acheive qualitativeley different conceptions of phenomena in the world around us.

In our empirical studies of experiences of schooling we are dealing with retrospective "stories," which is often considered to be problematic. The relations between life experiences, memory, and recalling of what happened, i e how previous experiences are integrated in present life, is something that psychological memory research has had difficulty clarifying, as Neisser (1982) reminds us. However, the tensions between past and present in retrospective considerations of schooling experiences are of vital concern if we are to we wish to understand education. Every story about the past is not a mechanical reflection, but a present act searching for a meaning of past experiences, a meaning that in turn is contributing to the present life (cf Bertaux, 1981). From this perspective critical conceptions of education can be understood in two ways; as expressions of different experiences of school, and as expressions of the ambition to explain their present situation.

The first way deals with the restructurating role of education and the second way with the legitimating function education has in society.

From these consideration we can be said to be dealing with two complementary perspectives on education:[3]

> A "factual" perspective: The way education works as an institution; who is getting what kind of education with what kinds of consequences in terms of performances and careers.
>
> An "experiential" perspective: The meaning of this process of education as experienced by those educated.

We think it is of importance to relate these two perspectives to each other in order to increase our understanding of education as a social phenomenon and to reflect on the purpose of studies in education. In this study we will concentrate on the relations between social origin, school performances and careers - how schooling works and how it is experienced.

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[3] This distinction is analogue to the one Marton (1981) makes between a first order (how it is) and a second order (how it is conceived tot be) perspective of phenomena in the world around us.

PURPOSE:

This study is an attempt to relate the functioning of the educational system to the meaning this system has for those being educated. First we will lay down some broad outlines concerning education in Sweden - the way the system is constructed. In connection with this we present results from a longitudinal study that will show how this system works in practice. We relate social origin and gender to school performance and careers for the population in focus. Second, a theoretical sample of the population is used in order to portray the meanings of education in a detailed qualitative way. Here, we describe the experiences of education in terms of criticisms and visions. Based on these studies we will relate experiences of education to issues of legitimation. More precisely, we are trying to answer the following questions:

> First, how is the educational system constructed in terms of different careers and consequent positions in the social structure? And what is the impact of education on the individuals regarding social origin, gender, and career in the current educational system?
>
> Second, what qualitatively different criticisms and visions of education are present in the life stories of former pupils? And what are the relations between criticisms and visions, on the one hand, and social origin, gender, and careers, on the other?

Having given answers to these questions, we will discuss the impact of experiences of schooling on the legitimation and change of education.

METHODS:

In this study we have turned to a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative methods are used to get the "factual" portrait. Here we are using performance tests, questionnaires etc for gathering data - and statistical analyses of these data. The qualitative methods are used to picture the experiences of schooling.

The "factual" education:

The longitudinal study is based on a previous study concerning the effects of learning English as early as in grade 1 in the comprehensive school. All beginners (a bit over 1 000 subjects) in a medium-sized Swedish town participated in this study from grade 1 to grade 9 in a number of investigations in the 1970s. They were then followed up in two further waves during the 1980s. The latter, which we will use here, had a response ratio of 70 % with no biases concerning social origin, gender, and conceptions of schooling, according to Lindblad & Pérez (1990). We are using the data base in order to construct different careers and to describe the distribution over careers. We will compare the different

careers - their recruitment and consequences. A starting point is the social origin of the pupils. This is complemented with information about the pupils' positions on three different occasions:

1980: After the completion of the comprehensive school, when the vast majority continued to the upper secondary school and only about 10 % started work.

1984: When most individuals had finished their upper secondary school - 25 % had started their higher education and about 60 % were working.

1986: Information about their career from a follow up study. At that time about 25 % were studying and 70 % were working.

School performance was measured by different tests during the primary school (grade 1 - 6) where no organizational differentiation was present in the school. We used tests in Swedish, Mathematics, and Intelligence (School Readiness Test and DBA - Differential Aptitude Analysis) as indications of what is regarded as knowledge and intellectual skills in school. For a detailed presentation, see Holmstrand (1982). The development of the differentiation is presented in diagrams based on standardized scores (the mean = 0 and the deviation = 1) for the tests in focus.

The experiential perspective:

From the data basis presented above we selected a small number of persons - differing with respect to social origin, gender, career, and schools. In total 26 persons were interviewed in 1989 when they were 26 years old. Each person was subjected to an interview, lasting about 2 hours, about their school time, career decisions, family life as a child and at present, present demands of competence, and future plans, etc.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed in order to find themes and qualitatively different perspectives in an inductive approach similar to that of phenomenography (Lindblad, 1983). In this study we are concentrating on one of the themes dealing with critical retrospections and visions of a better school. For a closer presentation, see Pérez (1990).

THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION:

The factual perspective:

The context of education has changed in a radical way during the last century. Sweden has been transformed from an agricultural to a highly industrialized society, from an underdeveloped to a wealthy nation. The changes in the labour force as presented in Table 1 is an attempt to give a short outline of this.

First, the table presents changes in the tasks of education - it plays a larger part in the reproduction of the labour force. Second, such changes will demand cultural changes in terms of habitus or class cultures. And third, this will have implications for the life trajectories of the population. We are studying grandchildren of peasants, children of industrial workers, who are moving into the service sectors with at least double the amount of time spent in the educational system.

The development of education in Sweden is characterized by two features. First, it has expanded dramatically. More students have got access to more education. Second, it has been a general policy to integrate different kinds of education. Basic to this has been the ambition to make the school "A School for Everyone" - to increase social mobility and educational opportunity in order to achieve more social and regional equality. As of 1962 we have a nine-year compulsory school, with little organizational differentiation. As of 1971 this is followed by an upper secondary school, where theoretical and practical vocational education is integrated. About 90 percent of the students continue nowadays to the this "gymnasium". Private schools are almost non-existent and higher

Tabell 1:: Changes in the Labour Force in Sweden 1900 - 1985.

	1900	1945	1985
Agriculture forestry	55	25	5
Manufacturing Construction	25	38	30
Services, etc	20	37	65
Total	100	100	100

education is free - if you qualify.

The educational reforms have been studied in different ways. We will here present some features of such studies.

First, the comprehensive school reform was largely organizational according to Kallós & Lundgren (1977), who pointed out that the content and the inner workings of the comprehensive school showed great similarities with the former school system based on organizational differentiation from grade 4 or 7. In this respect the former lower secondary school was encapsulated in the comprehensive school. And second, Callewaert & Nilsson (1980) studied the pedagogical differentiation - i e the differentiation within the unstreamed school class in the lower secondary school. Thus, differentiation in education survived in a new, more invisible form.

The outcomes of education in terms of social heritage and gender have been identified in other studies. The impact of education seems to be limited in this respect by studies of Gesser (1985) and Härnqvist (1977). Social mobility in Sweden has perhaps increased somewhat, according to Jonsson (1988), but not in any sense that could make education "a spearhead towards the future".

The educational system in Sweden has a rather good standard in international comparisons. However, it has been questioned in different ways during the last decade - the costs, the lack of

social mobility, the standards of student performance, etc.[4] The changes in the legitimation of education are rather great according to such indications. It seems reasonable to say that we in Sweden are approaching a legitimation crisis in education from a top-down perspective. But how is education conceived of among those who have experienced education from the other side - as ordinary students having everyday experiences of schooling.

Results from the longitudinal study:

In focus for our study is a medium-sized Swedish community, where we have followed children born in 1963. The community - about 120 000 inhabitants is centred round a town with old manufacturing traditions surrounded by a farms and villages. As an industrial town, it was a destination of immigrants - mostly workers from Finland and from Southern Europe. Since the 1970s there has been a university college in the community.

Almost 50 % of our population come from working-class homes. In 1986 - when they were 23 years old - slightly more than 50 percent held a working-class position in their career, as is shown in Table 2. Later on we would expect this share to decrease. There is an empirical correlation between social background and career. Working-class children have one chance in three to become working-

[4] The confidence in the educational system has decreased among the parents between 1969 and 1988 as is shown in a recent study by the National Board of Education. In a recent appendix to a national committé concerning the long time planning of the Swedish society ("Långtidsutredningen LU 90, Bilaga 22") the crisis within education is debated furter.

Tabell 2:: Social Origin, Gender and Career. Absolute numbers and percent.

	SOCIAL ORIGIN											
	WORKING CLASS				MIDDLE CLASS				TOTAL			
	MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE	
CAREER	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Working Class Career	95	67	108	67	80	43	69	39	175	53	177	53
Middle Class Career	47	33	54	33	107	57	111	61	154	47	165	48
Total	142	100	162	100	187	100	180	100	329	100	342	100

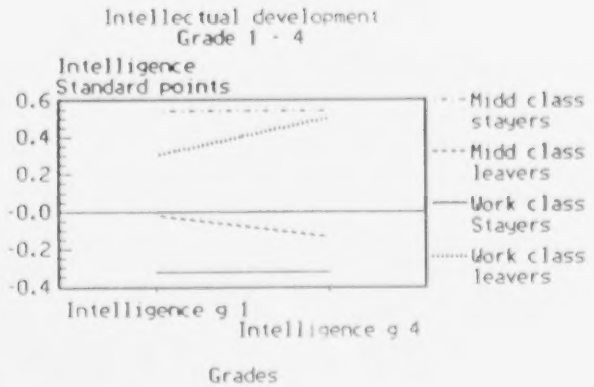
class leavers, i e to make a middle-class career. The reverse chance holds for middle-class children, who have almost two out of three chances to become middle-class stayers.[5] There seems to be little difference between males and females in the distribution over careers.

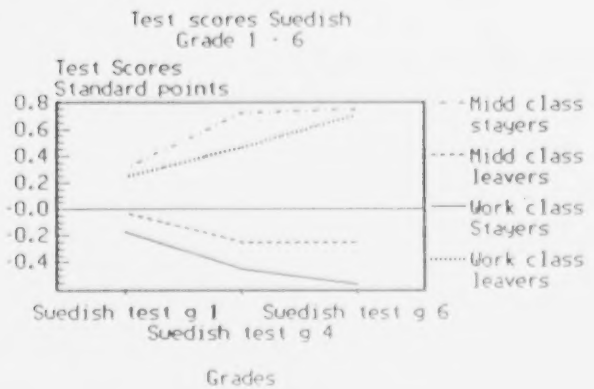
The development of school performance in relation to social background and careers is presented in Diagram 1. There the information is transformed into standard scores. Thus, it is possible to consider the differentiation between subjects who later on will

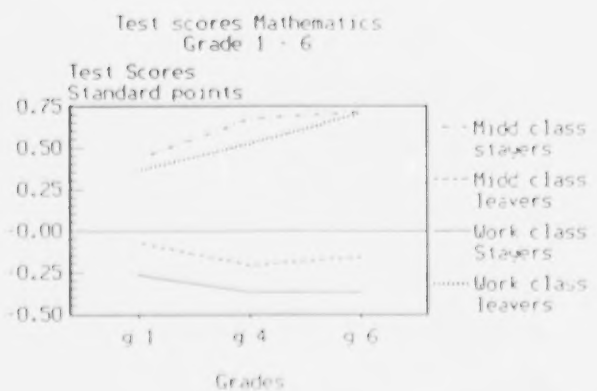
[5] When analyzing information about the parents support to their children (e g concerning homework and interest in school activities) and the cultural situation in the homes (e g number of books, time spent for reading) it was found that there were differences between stayers and leavers among working class children as well as among middle class children. The working class leavers tend to be more similar to the middle class stayers than to the working class stayers - perhaps except the number of books at home and how much their parents talked with them about homework and school experiences.

turn to different careers.

Diagram 1: Development of cognitive performances during the primary school related to social origin and career. Standardized means of scores for subgroups on intelligence tests and tests in Swedish and Mathematics.







The information in Diagram 1 can be summarized as follows. First, differences in school performance (Mathematics as well as in Swedish) increase during primary school. And second, social background has an initial effect, which decreases when one compares children from different social backgrounds pursuing similar careers. Concerning tests of "intelligence", we find larger initial differences. What happens is improved performance by working-class leavers and somewhat decreased performance by the middle-class leavers as a group.

The results were subjected to more detailed statistical analyses. These are summarized in the Appendix and show the impact of career, school, and gender on the development of performance. The effect of social background was small when careers were introduced. It is only in scores on tests in Swedish that there is a correlation with the background of the children. Gender had an impact on intelligence test scores. This is regarded as a result of the test construction in combination with the covariate construction, which is more 'verbally loaded. Gender works in different directions as regards test results in Swedish - where the female group had higher scores than the male group - and in mathematics, where the males performed better. Furthermore, the material sites of education - the different schools - were related to performance as well - with the exception of test scores in Swedish.

Thus, in the primary school we can distinguish three processes: (a) the division of pupils into different careers, where social background is an important determinant, (b) the homogenization of pupils in the same careers, but with different social background, and (c) increased differentiation between pupils in different careers, irrespective of social background.

EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOLING:

We have now portrayed the system of education in terms of social origin, career, and position in the social structure. The next step is to study the experiences of schooling in terms of criticisms and visions.

First it must be mentioned that perspectives on schooling in retrospect were earlier studied by means of a survey investigation by Pérez (1989) and Lindblad and Pérez (1990). They found that perspectives on schooling in retrospect were linked to concepts of social class, culture, and gender. However, there was little empirical correlation between social class, career, and conceptions about the fairness of education. The one exception was the criticism of female middle-class stayers who were the group who questioned the fairness of education most - a result that seems to be in line with what Häyrynen (1988) found about women in higher education.

In the qualitative analyses based on transcriptions of interviews five different categories of criticisms and visions were achieved as a result of the qualitative analyses. These categories were labelled "effectiveness", "caringness", "meaninglessness", "authority", and "self-realization". In five cases persons could be put into two categories and in three cases none of the categories were suitable. The system of categories is presented more in detail below:

Effectiveness:

Some former pupils focussed their criticisms on the excessively low demands in schools, demands that made it possible for everyone to be successful. Education was experienced as too simple, presenting too little of a challenge - and boring. They want a school that makes such high demands that it will be possible to fail, so you really have to work hard and that you will get a special feeling when you have achieved a good result. Marks are considered to have an important role, both as measures of competence and as expressions of demands of performance. There should be greater opportunities for individual work and for the parents to choose a school for their children in order to obtain a more efficient school.

> But then I think it is also wrong to aim too low in school, with the level of education. It is perhaps easy for me to say since I never had any difficulty, but to make school so .. everything so simple that those who found it most difficult would get through in an easy way. Those who have problems in school perhaps don't work at all. If those who find it hardest get by without working, then it will be quite uninspiring for those who have an easy time learning and who learn very fast. I remember in mathematics how I thought it was ridiculous when numbers came back and forth through channels and we were supposed to add them together or whatever ... (Middle-class child, engineer)

Caringness;

Some criticise the insecure atmosphere created by big classes and schools, by competition and rivalry, and by the lack of distinct rules. These former students often had bad experiences of teachers who did not recognize all the pupils in the big classes and who had too little time to find out difficulties among the pupils in time, whether they involved bullying or language difficulties or whatever. It was mostly the superior students who were recognized. For their own children they wish to have smaller classes and schools, with a smaller number of different teachers for each class, teachers who care about pupils with difficulties and who lay down distinct rules for life in schools in order to make the children aware of what matters.

> What I hope is that they will wind up in a fairly small class. I really think it is nice to be in a small class where it is possible to follow your class mates up through the grades without being thrown back and forth. When they start lower secondary school I hope that they will not wind up in too a big school. (Working-class child, teacher)

Meaninglessness:

Other former students criticise the lack of connections with reality - above all to what matters in working life. School was regarded as meaningless and they could not deal with it seriously. It was painful to have to go to a school of that kind with all its useless subjects. Instead a school with more practical work would be better.

> At work everything seems meaning - well, it seems to be meaningful to go to work. I didn't feel like that when I went to school. It was a pain. (...) I think they should do away with certain subjects in lower secondary school, maybe if you could choose not to take some subjects. (...) You ought to be able to influence the content of what you learn in these vocational schools, adapt them a bit more to...to reality. (...) Maybe you could go there one day a week and sit there reading blueprints and that sort of thing and then go to work the other four days of the week, at

a construction site. But in school you can spend the day building a wall and then in the evening you have to tear it down again. You see? In that case it's better to do that at work and maybe spend two or three days and do it properly. After all, it's much more satisfying if what you've built is left standing, isn't it? (Working-class child, bricklayer)

Authority:

Some former students criticise their own school for being too authoritarian, where the pupils were forced into a passive role based on unequal relations between teachers and pupils. They want a school where the pupils are allowed to be active and unconstrained and where they can learn to be critical and to voice their opinions.

... like in school it often happened that if you were late you got a demerit or something, but if the teacher was late, that was just fine. They could be late if they wanted. Because they had been to a meeting, they had been talking to a colleague on the way, and that sort of thing. But if we were late for class all hell broke loose. Why can't they be fair? Why can they do whatever they want and push us around just because they're older, making up rules for us when we can't make up rules for them. In that sense we had no say. It's like they didn't see us as equals. They were the dominant ones and we were their lackeys or something. That's how it often was. (Working-class child, waitress)

Self-realization:

School is criticized for its lack of capacity to recognize and to take care of the personal interests among the pupils. Pupils were merely conceived of as nameless persons and not as individuals. What was happening besides teaching was not considered to be of importance. A school is desired where the individual's interests and talents are merged into the curriculum in order to make teaching more interesting.

I felt that I never got any sympathy for...or that none of the teachers ever took notice of any interests you had in a better way. I mean every kid has some. Every pupil has his different talents or interests that should be woven into school more. It's so damned separate. (Middle-class child, cultural occupation)

Categories and Careers:

In Table 3 we can study empirical relations between careers and experiences of schooling in terms of criticisms and visions of a better school.

Tabell 3: : Criticisms and Careers. Absolute number. (n=26) WW = Working class Stayers, WM = Working Class leavers, MM = Midddle class stayers, MW = Middle class leavers.

CATHEGORIES	CAREERS			
	WW	WM	MM	MW
Effectiveness	0	2	4	0
Caringness	6	5	0	3
Meaninglessness	2	0	0	0
Authority	3	1	0	0
Selfrealization	0	0	1	0
None above	2	0	1	0

Working-class children in working-class careers criticise education in terms of care and stress that aspect in their vision of a better school. And middle-class children in middle-class careers deal with issues of efficiency. Not visible in the table is the fact that the only two who deal with care as well as with efficiency are working-class children who have turned into middle-class careers. There seems to be an empirical correlation between life trajectory (in terms of social origin, career, and position in the social structure) and criticisms and visions of education based on experiences of schooling.

DISCUSSION:

In this study we have showed the construction of the educational system built on the dual ambitions to integrate the up and coming generations in a school for everybody and to differentiate them in relation to the demands given by the social structure based on vertical division of labour.

In the longitudinal study we found that in the educational system social origin and career were linked to each other. Two thirds of the working-class children stayed in working-class careers, and two thirds of the middle-class children stayed in their class. Education played a part here in two senses. First, since it is an institution that mediates careers in this respect by means of its structure and processes. And second, since it has an impact on the differentiation between careers and homogenization within careers with reference to school performance. Given the notion of career, the impact of education seems to be heavy. However, the fairness of education was not really questioned as such by the former students to a larger extent.

From the qualitative studies of experiences of schooling we could identify five qualitatively different conceptions of criticisms and visions. These categories were labelled "effectiveness", "caringness", "meaninglessness", "authority", and "self-realization". These conceptions could be regarded as condensed experiences of education formulated in retrospect.

The fact that the experiences were formulated in retrospect could mean two things. First, it could be assumed to be a valid picture of what our subjects have been through - it shows their experiences during their school careers. Or second, what experiences they present could be regarded as a consequence of their present life and position rather than their experiences from school. Looking at the relations between career and conception we found empirical relations between conception and social origin as well as career. All six persons presenting an "efficiency conception" are in middle-class positions, and nine out of fourteen presenting a "care conception" do so from a working-class position. But only two of the six working-class leavers are having an efficiency conception and both of them present a care conception as well. And four of the six middle-class stayers show an efficiency conception, none of them a care conception, a meaningfulness conception, or an authority conception. This could be taken as evidence of the impact of social origin and lived experiences rather than the simple impact of the present social position.

However, it seems to be of little value to arrange a fight between past and present experiences. The point is that there are qualitatively different conceptions concerning schooling as expressed in criticisms and visions and that they are related to different life trajectories where education has played a part. Our conclusion from this is that education - in this case with the double functions of integration and differentiation - by means of its structure and practices questions itself. Such a questioning has less

to do with the perceived fairness of the system. (Actually, a vital part of education is to achieve consensus among students and parents about its fairness as regards marks, treatment, relevance of content, etc. In this respect there is little of a legitimation crisis for education.) It has rather to do with life in school from different positions - a life that could be less insecure, less of a waste of time or less boring, with more meaningful activities and more respect for the students and their interests.

Education is not "innocent" here. The criticisms and visions reflect the construction of the system as well as the different positions in the social structure. Education in the welfare state has the dual task of differentiation and selection, on the one hand, and, on the other, of integrating social classes and cultures into a school for everyone. How this task is solved in practice we have shown in the longitudinal study. Experiences of this solution connected with life trajectories show different aspects of schooling. The contradiction between conceptions of efficiency and care illustrates this. Such a contradiction shows a dilemma for education as well as a challenge for educational change.

It seems to be doubtful whether education should attempt to adjust to both conceptions. From which positions will we hear voices or silence? And who will exit (cf Elster, 1985). It seems to be reasonable that it is from positions where current education matters that voices of change will be heard most loudly. But

education in a democracy is more than a means for reproduction of such positions and cultures. To discuss different experiences of schooling and the meaning of education for different cultures, careers, and positions in society as well as the intended tasks of education related to the modern project is an important task. Experiences of schooling is part in the reproduction and change of societies. It could be a good point to make such experiences visibile in acts of communication and change.

APPENDIX:

Appendix A: Results from covariance analyses on performances dependent on social background, career, gender and school and earlier performances. A summary. (n=655)

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	DEPENDENT VARIABLES: DBA Grade 4	Mathematics Test grade 6	Mathematics Mark Grade 6	Swedish Test grade 6	Swedish Mark Grade 6
R-square for model	.38 *	.40 *	.63 *	.39 *	.76 *
CLASSES:					
Social Background	-	-	-	* M > W	-
Career	* M > W	* M > W	* M > W	* M > W	* M > W
Gender	* m > f	* m > f	-	-	* m > f
School	*	*	*	*	-
INTERACTION:					
Background * Career	-	(*)	-	-	-
Background * Gender	-	-	-	-	-
Career * Gender	*	(*)	-	(*)	-
Background * Career * Gender	-	-	-	-	-
COVARIATE:	Test grade 1	Test grade 1	Mark Grade 6	Test grade 1	Mark Grade 6

M = Middle Class W = Working Class m = male f = female
* = Significant at .01 level.

The statistical analyses are done by means of covariance where scores in grade six are the dependent variable "predicted" by scores in grade six in combination with divisions in background, career, sex and school.[6]

[6]. We will not go into detail in our use of statistical analyses here. The data about the dependent variables (IQ- tests, performance tests etc) were considered to be of interval scale type. Here covariance analyses were performed by means of a SAS GLM procedure - a method of least squares to fit linear models. The model was constructed like this: predicted performance in grade 6 = classes (social background, career, gender, school) and as covariate performance in grade 1 in the same field. Interaction between social background, career and gender was analyzed in relation to the model. Differences between class variables was conducted by a least square means procedure. (SAS User's Guide: Statistics. Version 6 Edition, pp 571 - 600. 1987).

Appendix B: Criticisms and visions of education. Persons and conceptions.

		CRITICISMS AND VISIONS				
CAREER	PERSON	Effectiveness	Caringness	Meaninglessness	Authority	Selfrealization
Working Class Stayers	Örjan	-	+	-	+	-
	Bengt	-	-	-	-	-
	David	-	+	-	-	-
	Markus	-	+	+	-	-
	Irene	-	+	-	-	-
	Sirkka	-	+	-	+	-
	Kristin	-	-	-	-	-
	Camilla	-	+	-	+	-
	Annika	-	-	+	-	-
Working Class Leavers	Pentti	-	+	-	-	-
	Christer	+	+	-	-	-
	Erik	-	+	-	-	-
	Jessika	+	+	-	-	-
	Arja	-	+	-	-	-
	Monika	-	-	-	+	-
Middle Class Stayers	Henrik	+	-	-	-	-
	Joakim	+	-	-	-	-
	Jonas	+	-	-	-	-
	Tina	-	-	-	-	-
	Ulrika	-	-	-	-	+
	Sofie	+	-	-	-	-
Middle Class Leavers	Kjell	-	-	-	-	-
	Gabriel	-	+	-	-	-
	Svante	-	+	-	-	-
	Erika	-	-	-	-	-
	Susanne	-	+	-	-	-

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